

Remarks

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and the following comments. Claims 47-56 have been previously added and claims 1-46 were previously canceled. Claims 57-59 have been added with this Response. As such, claims 47-59 are currently pending.

Finality of the Office Action

Applicants respectfully assert that the finality of the previous Office Action is inappropriate. Specifically, it is noted that the grounds for rejecting claim 54 is not explained in Office Action; in fact, claim 54 is not mentioned at all in the text of the Office Action. For this reason, Applicants respectfully assert that the finality of the previous Office Action be withdrawn, and a new Office Action issued that explains the disposition of all of the claims.

Claim Amendments

Claims 47, 49 and 54 have been amended and claims 57-59 have been added with this Response. The amendments to claims 47 and 54 are supported by the specification, for example by Figures 1 and 3. Figure 1 shows a plurality of grooves that extend into the strain relief, and Figure 3 shows a helical groove that extends into the strain relief. As can be seen from the figures, these grooves are formed along planes that extend at angles to an axis running down the lumen of the hub. As such there is support for the amendments to claims 47, 49 and 54 and for the new claims 57-59.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 47, 48, 50, 52, 53 and 56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Goldenberg et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,352,198 (hereinafter “Goldenberg”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. In order for a reference to anticipate a claim, each and every element of the claim must be present in the reference. See M.P.E.P. §2131.

Claim 47 recites, in part, a monolithic catheter hub with a distal strain relief portion, the distal strain relief portion being molded with one or more grooves, the one or

more grooves formed along planes extending at an angle to the axis. In contrast, Goldenberg does not appear to have any such grooves formed in the hub. As such, Goldenberg cannot anticipate claim 47. In addition, claim 56 depends from claim 55, which recites, in part, a monolithic catheter hub with a distal strain relief portion, the distal strain relief portion being molded with one or more grooves, the one or more grooves formed along planes extending at an angle to the axis. As discussed above, Goldenberg does not appear to contain such a hub and strain relief, and as such claim 56 is allowable over this reference. Because they are dependent on claim 47 and because they recite additional patentably distinct elements, Applicants also assert that claims 48, 50, 52 and 53 are also allowable over this reference.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 49 and 51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Goldenberg as modified by Wijkamp et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,167,647 (hereinafter “Wijkamp”). As mentioned above, Goldenberg appears to be missing at least a monolithic catheter hub with a distal strain relief portion, the distal strain relief portion being molded with one or more grooves, the one or more grooves formed along planes extending at an angle to the axis. In addition, Wijkamp does not appear to disclose this portion of claim 47 that is missing from Goldenberg. Specifically, it appears as though the ridges 8 and grooves 7 of Wijkamp are formed longitudinally (see column 2, lines 60-61). These grooves would not be formed along a plane that is at an angle with respect to an axis running down the center of a lumen of the hub; rather, these grooves appear to be formed along a plane that is parallel with such an axis. As such, the combination of Goldenberg and Wijkamp does not appear to disclose each and every element of independent claim 47, and all elements of dependent claims 49 and 51 are also not disclosed in this combination of references.

Claim 55 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Goldenberg as modified by Bartholomew, U.S. Patent No. 4,802,947. Claim 55 depends from claim 54. As mentioned above with respect to claim 56, Goldenberg does not appear to disclose each and every element of claim 54. In addition, Bartholomew does not appear to disclose the elements of claim 54 that are missing from Goldenberg. As such,

this combination of references cannot disclose all elements of claim 55, and claim 55 is allowable over these references.

Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested. It is submitted that all pending claims are currently in condition for allowance. Issuance of a Notice of Allowance in due course is anticipated. If a telephone conference might be of assistance, please contact the undersigned attorney at 612-677-9050.

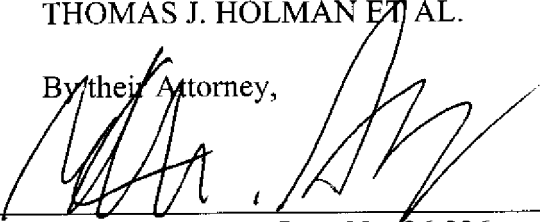
Respectfully submitted,

THOMAS J. HOLMAN ET AL.

By their Attorney,

Date:

Dec. 12, 2006


Glenn M. Seager, Reg. No. 36,926
CROMPTON, SEAGER & TUFTE, LLC
1221 Nicollet Avenue, Suite 800
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403-2420
Tel: (612) 677-9050